

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

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INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN

USMISSION NATO

S E C R E T ROME 13342

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF, UN, IT

SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST PEACE CONFERENCE

1. WE LEARNED LAST EVENING FROM DUCCI (DIRECTOR GENERAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS MFA) THAT AMBASSADOR ORTONA HAS INSTRUCTIONS TO URGE THE DEPARTMENT TO ENGAGE THE UNITED NATIONS MORE SUBSTANTIVELY IN THE MID EAST PEACE TALKS. WHEN IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT THE UN SYG IS EXPECTED AT GENEVA FOR THE OPENING OF THE TALKS, DUCCI EXPLAINED THAT THE ITALIANS CONSIDER IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE FOR THE UN (EITHER WALDHEIM OR HIS DESIGNATE) TO BE CHAIRMAN AND NOT MERELY AN OBSERVER. THE GOI PREFERS THAT THE UN HAVE A SERIOUS ROLE.

2. THE ITALIAN CONCERN AS DESCRIBED BY DUCCI SEEMS TO BE THAT A PEACE CONFERENCE IN WHICH THE U.S. AND THE SOVIET UNION CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY ARE PULLING THE STRINGS WILL HAVE A SERIOUSLY DEBILITATING EFFECT ON THE UN. DUCCI INDICATED THAT THE UN IS, AFTER ALL, SEIZED OF THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM. ALL MEMBERS OCCASIONALLY TALK ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UN FOR WORLD PEACE, AND YET WHEN THE ANTAGONISTS MOVE TO THE CONFERENCE TABLE THE UN OBSERVER IS PRESENT MERELY FOR "WINDOW DRESSING".

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3. WITH RESPECT TO EUROPEAN PARTICIPATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE TALKS, DUCCI REMARKED THAT IT WAS PROBABLY BETTER FOR THE EUROPEANS THAT THEY NOT REPEAT NOT BE PRESENT BECAUSE THEY COULD EXPECT OIL PRESSURE FROM THE ARABS OVER EVERY TWIST AND

TURN OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

4. COMMENT: CLEARLY THE ITALIANS ARE RESIGNED TO BEING EXCLUDED FROM THE CONFERENCE. GAJA HAD EARLIER TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT GO'S FIRST INTEREST IS IN HAVING THE CONFERENCE TAKE PLACE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. OTHER ASPECTS ARE SECONDARY. HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT MAY HAVE TO EXPLAIN ITS ABSENCE IN PARLIAMENT, BUT IF THE OTHER EUROPEANS ARE ABSENT THIS SHOULD BE EASIER. THE PROPOSAL FOR ACTIVE UN PARTICIPATION MAY BE READ ALSO IN LIGHT OF THE NEED FOR A PUBLIC POSTURE. VOLPE

SECRET

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